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ISRAEL: Government pressed to spell out its territorial requirements for a settlement with Arab states. (Page 3)

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ISRAEL: Sentiment is increasing for more specific definitions of Tel Aviv's territorial requirements for a peace settlement with the Arab states.

Senior Israeli officials reportedly suspect that the Soviets, as part of their strategy to neutralize a US-Chinese rapprochement, will inform President Nixon during his visit that Moscow now accepts the Rogers plan, which calls for only minimal changes in the pre-1967 borders, as part of a peace settlement. The Israelis fear this move would force the US to choose between opposing Israel or abandoning a long-standing policy and incurring serious losses in the Arab world.

This perceived Soviet strategy, as well as favorable Western reaction to King Husayn's recent West Bank proposal, may be the motive behind a sudden eruption of official and press comment on the need to define, especially to the US, Israel's territorial objectives in the occupied territories. Israel Galili, minister without portfolio and a close confidant of Prime Minister Meir, said on 20 March that Israel sought "meaningful" not "minimal" changes. He described the union of East and West Jerusalem as a meaningful change.

Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Alon last week described his original concept, introduced in 1967, for a settlement with Jordan as "more realistic than ever before." Alon claimed that it is now possible to mobilize a large majority in the Knesset in support of his plan, which includes a 10- to 15-mile defensive strip held by Israel in the Jordan Valley, an Israeli-controlled connecting corridor with East Jordan, and other border adjustments in strategic areas. Speaking to the press on 21 March, Mrs. Meir described the "Alon Plan" as the minimum any cabinet minister would accept, but she said such questions should be discussed between the parties involved and not within the cabinet.

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